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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6404
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1569
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1388
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001136

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WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: FORUM EXAMINES SECURITY, GANGS, DEPORTEES

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¶1. (U) Summary: Members of the GoH, civil society and the international community, including post's DEA representative, came together on June 19 to discuss the challenges Haiti faces from organized crime, corruption and gang violence. Much of the discussion focused on the GoH's National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion Program (CNDDR), represented by Alix Fils-Aime. Other GoH speakers emphasized the government's dedication to tackling these challenges. International speakers examined analogous circumstances in other Caribbean nations and Central America, and also described the successful disarmament of the Bel Air neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. End Summary.

¶2. (U) CNDDR president Alix Fils-Aime, speaking at the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum's workshop on June 19, stated that CNDDR currently has 200 people in the reinsertion program, and they are preparing to receive 150 more. The program is focusing more and more on microenterprise in hopes that those emerging from the program will be economically viable members of society. Fils-Aime is working with the business community and private sector to regenerate faltering industries and cultivate new small and medium enterprises in Cite Soleil. He also pointed to the need to secure ports, customs and the borders to prevent new shipments of weapons from entering the country. "I assure you that the government will find the importers and punish them to the fullest extent of the law," he said.

¶3. (U) Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Edmond Mulet noted that "some countries" say deportees are not a problem for Haiti, and asked Fils-Aime his opinion. Fils-Aime stated that although deportees are ill equipped for life in Haitian society, he could not say they were joining organized criminal groups in significant numbers. He stated very clearly that deportees are not the principle factor in gang activity. They are more likely to become petty criminals than to become involved in the major gang networks in areas like Cite Soleil and Martissant. He also said that the GoH could not rely solely on the deporting country to solve the problem, and that the GoH needs national laws and regulations governing the reentry of deportees.

¶4. (U) Post's DEA representative, Gerald Graves, outlined the common routes used by traffickers to transport drugs from

South America through the island of Hispaniola and on to the U.S. and Europe. He described the typical instance in which a plane lands in Haiti and transfers drugs to waiting vehicles, a process that, including refueling, only takes six to ten minutes. He also touched on the financial motivations behind drug trafficking. Graves cited several examples of successes in the fight against drug trafficking in Haiti, including the Haitian National Police's cocaine seizure and arrest of several drug traffickers and HNP officers in Leogane on May 31.

15. (U) Rubem Cesar Fernandes of the Brazilian NGO Viva Rio described efforts to integrate security and development programs to bring peace to Bel Air. In 2006, MINUSTAH's Brazilian battalion successfully ended outright gang warfare in the area. In May 2007, 11 rival groups signed a peace accord that divides the neighborhood into specific territories for each group. The accord includes incentives, such as scholarships and entry into the CNDDR program, which multiply the longer the peace holds. Fernandes rejected the term 'gang,' and described the typical member of such a group as territorial, politically militant, culturally active and engaged in some sort of violence, be it criminal activity or armed resistance to the police or UN. (Note: Though a great success story, Bel Air is not a typical Haitian slum. It is a close-knit community with a long, shared history, whereas many other slums are comprised of recent transplants from other parts of Haiti. End Note.)

16. (U) Representing the GoH, Prime Minister Jacques-Edouard Alexis and Secretary of State for Public Security Luc Eucher Joseph both pledged GoH dedication to fighting crime, corruption and violence. Prime Minister Alexis also stated that the security situation in Haiti is constantly improving and praised MINUSTAH for helping the Haitian National Police carry out their mission to 'serve and protect.' He noted

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that the GoH needs justice reform, security, and tougher financial and customs controls.

17. (U) Comment: Fils-Aime talks a good game, but the CNDDR cannot cite many tangible accomplishments. SRSB Mulet deliberately raised the issue of deportees and in his framing of the question, placed the blame squarely on the deporting countries. Fils-Aime did not take the bait, and instead focused his criticism on GoH policy, or lack thereof, toward deportees.
SANDERSON